

Briefing at 1130 8 June

STATINTL

Legislative Counsel
for Briefing of Sen. Young, ND

Vietnam:

I. No basic change in Vietnam situation.

A. Allied forces--mainly U.S.--continue their big spoiling ops to keep enemy from launching his so-called Summer Offensive, which appears to have been set for kick-off May 29 or 30.

1. For instance, U.S. Marines in Operation UNION (I and II) killed 1,566 North Vietnamese of the NVA 2nd Division, southeast of Danang. The 2nd Division obviously wasn't ready to kick off with any offensive on May 30 as a result. (Operation lasted from April 21 to June 5.)
2. American dead were 220, so KIA ration, statistic we watch, was a 7 to 1 ratio.
3. But while we don't compare wounded--we don't know enemy figure and almost all our wounded survive--we have to take into account that units in combat have to have replacements for these wounded--
4. And our wounded are going up, largely as a result of greatly increased enemy artillery and mortar fire. Marines in OP UNION, for instance, lost 713 wounded, and our total casualties now, killed and wounded, are running in excess of 2,000 per week in the peak fighting periods.

B. Last week our casualties were down sharply, as contact slackened:

	<u>21-27 May</u>	<u>28 May - 3 June</u>	
Enemy KIA:	2,216	2,420*	----(South Viets contributed with some major local successes)
US KIA	313	214	
Wounded	8,616	1,160	
MIA	_____	_____	
Total US:	2,929	1,374	

II. Not much change in the air war in the North, except that we are wearing down the North Vietnamese air force as they try to take part in the air war.

A. So far, in air-to-air combat, we have shot down 74, possibly as many as 84 enemy aircraft.

B. They are getting some replacements from China, but still keep a good share of their own reserve out-of-country at a Chinese base. The inventory in North Vietnam is now something less than 50 aircraft.

III. In a very interesting political development, which hasn't really had much time to show its effects or its causes yet, the North Vietnamese top Communist theoretical journal has come out with very thinly veiled criticism of Mao Tse-tung for purging the Chinese Communist Party.

IV. The North Vietnamese Army continues to move back into the DMZ in force as soon as we pull back after a